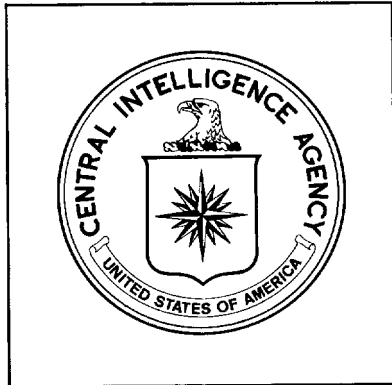


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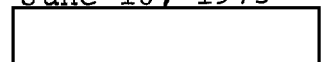
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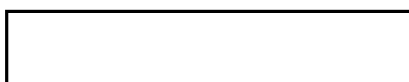
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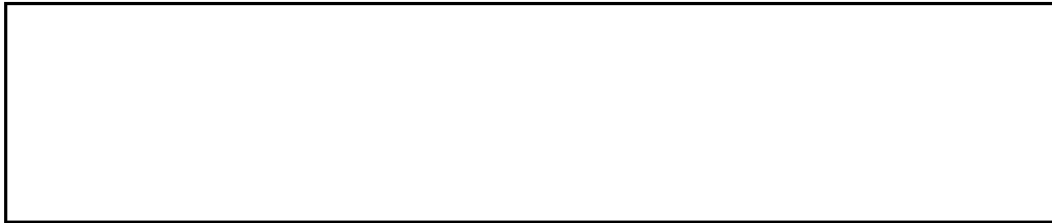


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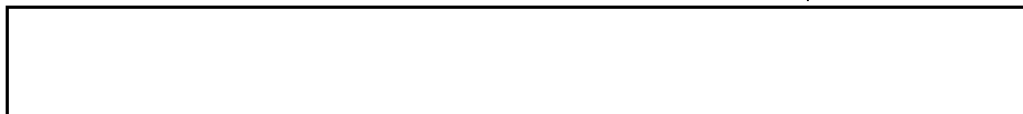
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Miki Fails To Improve Position

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Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki has been frustrated in his efforts to strengthen his weak political position. A compromise choice last December, Miki is confronted with increased bickering in his ruling party and fading opposition party cooperation. His plans to obtain a personal mandate through national elections will probably have to be postponed until at least late this year or early 1976.

Party Problems

Miki's capacity for independent action has been limited by the circumstances under which he came to power--a compromise choice to resolve a standoff between two powerful prime ministerial aspirants, Masayoshi Ohira (now Finance Minister), and Takeo Fukuda (now Deputy Prime Minister). Ever since Miki took power, the Ohira and Fukuda groups have subtly attempted to keep Miki from achieving any real successes and thereby solidifying his position. Fukuda's supporters, in particular, have been fearful that if Miki is able to serve another two years or so, the 69-year old Fukuda will be too old to run again.

Miki is also having problems with the man who actually engineered his surprise accession to power, Etsusaburo Shiina. Shiina, vice president of the ruling party and long a power in the party's right wing, has been highly critical of Miki recently, apparently because of Miki's efforts, however limited, to act on his own.

Diet Problems

Early in his term, Miki pledged to push six key items through the Diet in the hope that success

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would establish his leadership credentials. The programs included: a Japan-China friendship treaty; a controversial continental shelf agreement with South Korea; ratification of the NPT; and three domestic political reform proposals.

Miki's proposals did much to help the ruling party's image, which had suffered from the financial scandals that caused the resignation of Miki's predecessor, Tanaka. Ruling party leaders, however, were upset because Miki had failed to go through the usual elaborate intra-party consultations before making his public pledges.

Miki failed to achieve any of the six goals during the regular session of the Diet, which ended on May 25, in part because of a lack of ruling party support, and in part because of a delay caused by opposition party protests over a political indiscretion by Justice Minister Inaba--Inaba publicly called for revision of Japan's "no-war" constitution, which infuriated the leftist opposition. Miki, to avoid offending Inaba's powerful supporters in the ruling party, had to ignore opposition demands for Inaba's resignation. The acrimonious public exchange harmed Miki's policy of dialogue rather than confrontation with the opposition parties. Miki's cooperative relationship with the opposition parties helped compensate for his lack of strong support within the ruling party, but Miki may now have lost some of this leverage.

As a result, Miki was forced to obtain an extension of the Diet session until July 4. Even with this respite, however, only one of the six items--an election redistricting bill--has a strong chance of passage, although chances for NPT ratification have improved slightly in the last week. NPT ratification has been held up by right-wing elements, who attached a series of "conditions" to ratification unacceptable

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to party doves and the opposition parties in order to keep open Japan's nuclear weapons option. The Japan-China treaty negotiations are stalled over Chinese insistence on a clause opposing third-party hegemony in Asia, which would be unacceptable to Fukuda, Shiina, and other right-wing leaders in the ruling party. The continental shelf agreement with South Korea has been blocked by anti-Seoul elements in the ruling party and the leftist opposition. The remaining two political reform bills are opposed by various business and political interests.

Picking Up the Pieces

Miki's hopes to pass at least part of his package, dissolve the Diet, and then call national elections this spring, have all but evaporated. This means that Miki will have to come to the US for planned talks in early August without a clear mandate--a situation he wanted to avoid.

Conceivably, Miki could dissolve the Diet as the July 4 end of the extended session approaches, charging that his own party and the opposition parties had obstructed his efforts to fulfill promises made to the Japanese people. This, of course, would alienate the ruling party elders and make Miki's position difficult even if he did receive a clear mandate.

It is more likely that Miki hopes he can capitalize on any positive reaction to his Washington visit, as well as the Emperor's October journey to the US before seeking a popular mandate at the polls.

Miki's Prospects

Whatever Miki's limitations, his longevity in office probably depends primarily on a continuing deadlock between the two principal contenders, Fukuda and Ohira.

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Miki's rivals are unlikely to want to dump him precipitately while the deadlock continues, because without prior agreement on a successor, the ruling party would be thrown into chaos--possibly resulting in an outright split.

In the interim, however, Miki's rivals will almost certainly exploit any opportunity to embarrass or undercut him. Miki is particularly vulnerable on the China issue. If he fails to achieve a peace treaty, public confidence in his leadership ability would clearly suffer. On the other hand if he caves in to Peking's demands on the anti-hegemony clause, he would further alienate the party's right wing and risk upsetting the current delicate balance in the party.

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Kim Il-song Tour

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North Korean President Kim Il-song returned to Pyongyang on June 10 from a tour of Eastern Europe and North Africa. The trip was Kim's first to Eastern Europe since the 1950s and his first ever to Africa. He began his tour in Romania (May 22-26), then went to Algeria and Mauritania (May 26-June 2), and returned to Eastern Europe, where he visited Bulgaria (June 2-5) and Yugoslavia (June 5-9). The trip seemed designed to emphasize North Korea's independent stance in the communist world and to gain backing for North Korean efforts to join the nonaligned movement and reiterate Pyongyang's identification with the third world.

A major result of the visit was the conclusion of a "treaty of friendship and cooperation" with Romania, a treaty which emphasizes national independence and equality--in language that seems aimed at Moscow. Kim also got specific backing from Algeria and Yugoslavia for his bid to join the nonaligned movement, and an economic protocol was signed in Bulgaria. Kim avoided harsh rhetoric on the Korean situation during his tour, and each of his hosts offered routine support for North Korean positions in the joint communiques following each visit.

Eastern Europe Relations

In his visits to Romania and Yugoslavia, Kim pointedly stressed national independence and equality in remarks that seemed aimed at the Soviet Union. At a banquet speech in Romania on May 22, Kim noted that "socialist countries...now refuse to blindly follow the big powers but seek to act independently," and at a May 24 rally there, he observed that "all" communist and workers' parties are "equal and independent," and that "there are no higher or lower parties."

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The friendship treaty with Romania, which Kim observed is the "first such document between socialist countries," codified a number of long-standing Romanian and Korean concepts of interstate and inter-party relations. The treaty demands that "foreign military bases in the territory of other countries must be completely dismantled and all foreign troops stationed in other countries be withdrawn," language that applies not only to US forces in South Korea but also to Soviet forces in Eastern Europe. A similar demand was also included in the Korean-Yugoslav communique.

The joint communique on the Romanian visit stated that the atmosphere of the talks demonstrated "warm comradely friendship, mutual esteem and understanding," and that "unanimity" was reached on all topics discussed. The communique on Ceausescu's visit to Korea in 1971 was less effusive but correct when it referred to a "friendly, sincere and comradely atmosphere."

The June 5 communique with Bulgaria indicated that substantial differences separate the two sides. Like the communique issued following Bulgarian leader Zhivkov's trip to Pyongyang in October 1973, it failed to mention unanimity or an identity of views and characterized the atmosphere of the talks as one of "Fraternal friendship and comradely trust," again a correct but restrained formulation.

As in 1973, differences between Pyongyang and Sofia openly emerged on the questions of detente and socialist unity. At a rally on June 5, Zhivkov issued a strong call for communist ideological unity and stated that the communist movement must be protected from any "dissident elements" or from any attempt to confine individual parties to "national boundaries." While Pyongyang radio carried the speech, KCNA did not --the only time during the tour that KCNA failed to transmit a speech by the host leader while fully reporting Kim's remarks. Kim's speeches played down his

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differences with the Bulgarians, but at the June 5 Sofia rally he did caution against detente, warning against "placatory and deceptive tricks" of the imperialists.

Nonaligned Role

Kim received backing in Algeria and Yugoslavia for Pyongyang's bid to join the nonaligned group. In a June 6 speech Yugoslav President Tito expressed support for "the endeavors of North Korea fully to participate in the activity of the nonaligned countries," --support that was reaffirmed in the joint communique. In the communique signed in Algiers, both sides expressed "deep satisfaction," with the recommendation of a March 1975 meeting of the nonaligned group's co-ordination bureau that Pyongyang be admitted to the group. In both Algeria and Yugoslavia, Kim noted that the principles of nonalignment are in accord with the "independent home and foreign policies" pursued by North Korea.

Korean Situation

Kim made standard remarks on the issue of Korean unification during his speeches. Only once, in a May 22 banquet speech in Romania, did he pledge Northern support for the "struggle" in South Korea. In his speeches Kim did not allude to the North-South dialogue, and the only mention of it in a communique came in Algiers, where the Algerian side condemned the South for "breaking up the dialogue." All of Kim's host countries expressed support in their joint communiqués for Kim's five-point proposal for peaceful reunification, the North Korean demand that foreign troops under the UN flag in South Korea be withdrawn, and for opposition to the "imperialist" policy of "two Koreas." Perhaps because of Algeria's leading role in presenting the Pyongyang side in the UN debate over Korea, Kim paid special attention in Algiers to the possibility

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of UN action forcing the withdrawal from South Korea of US troops "disguised as UN forces." At a May 28 rally Kim noted that the UN debate has been "progressing favorably" and expressed confidence that in the future the UN would take "decisive action for the withdrawal of UN forces."

Kim's most detailed comments on the Korean situation during the visit came in response to questions during interviews with the official Algerian newspaper *El Moudjahid* on May 29 and with AFP on the 31st. In both interviews, which were carried by KCNA, Kim reviews Pyongyang's proposals for peaceful reunification. In the Algerian interview, Kim repeated the line he had used in Peking in April that in any future war, the North will "only lose the military demarcation line but will gain national unification." He repeated a standard litany of charges against US actions in South Korea and claimed that these actions created the "danger of another war breaking out in Korea at any moment."

By contrast, in the AFP interview on the 31st, Kim professed to be "optimistic the enemy will not be able to unleash a war," and noted that "now the United States is not in a position to fight either on a military front or an economic one," though he stopped short of directly questioning the US military commitment to South Korea, saying "we may not dare say" that the US has gone "totally bankrupt militarily."

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